

# May 2008 Newsletter

# LABOR PARTY

Alachua County Local Organizing Committee

Get your H.R. 676 bumpersticker today!

**NATIONAL HEALTH  
CARE NOW!**

**Tell Congress: Pass H.R. 676**

For more info on H.R. 676 go to [www.sickcare.org](http://www.sickcare.org) • Sticker designed & distributed by: Alachua County Labor Party (352-375-2832) [www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua](http://www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua)

The Alachua County Labor Party is proud to introduce our newest bumpersticker — a flashy red one in support of H.R. 676, the National Health Insurance Act. The union-made stickers, designed by LP co-chair Jenny

Brown, are \$2.00 each. They are the perfect addition to any car bumper, workplace bulletin board, or really any flat surface that people look at regularly! To order your bumpersticker please fill out and return the order form on pg. 11.

## June 19: National Day of Action against health insurance companies

From June 18-20, 2008, the America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) convention will take place at San Francisco's Moscone Center West. Greeting them on June 19 will be a large protest of single payer activists from all over California. In solidarity with their **"Healthcare: YES; Insurance Companies: NO"** rally, Healthcare NOW has called for June 19 to be a National Day of Action against health insurance companies. The Alachua County Labor Party will be making plans for June 19 at our May 27 general meeting.

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*ACLP members and HR 676 supporters protest at the Gainesville office of BlueCross/BlueShield at last year's National Day of Action.*

Wrote one organizer, "AHIP is the convention for health insurance lobbyists."

The AHIP program on Thursday, June 19 features former US senators John Breaux and Jim Frist, former Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, former Counselor to President Bush Dan Bartlett and former Chairman of the Democratic National Committee Terry McAuliffe. All these speakers oppose legislation - such as California's SB 840 and US HR 676 - that would remove the health insurance industry from our healthcare.

Among the demonstrations being planned across the country for the June 19 Day of Action:

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Cigna

Minnesota-Minnetonka  
United Health

Oklahoma City  
Blue Cross Blue Shield

Louisville, Kentucky  
Humana

Connecticut  
Aetna - Hartford

Chicago, Illinois  
Blue Cross Blue Shield HQ

New York, NY  
GHI/HIP

Indianapolis, Indiana  
WellPoint

San Antonio, Texas  
Humana Insurance Co.

Newark, New Jersey

## Health care Around the World: What's the Truth?

**Tuesday, June 24 / 6:30 pm**

*At our June general meeting we will reprise our popular program about national health care systems in other countries.*

*We'll hear from people who have lived in other countries to hear the TRUTH about how universal health care systems work in countries like Canada, France, Turkey, and Denmark.*

*If you were born or lived in a country with national health care and would like to talk about your experiences please call the Labor Party office at 375-2832 or email [aclp@floridalaborparty.org](mailto:aclp@floridalaborparty.org)*



# “Who’s Afraid of Insurance Companies” signature ad update

As you know the Labor Party is collecting signatures for an ad to run in the Gainesville Sun just before the Democratic and Republican conventions calling on the candidates to “be bold” and “stand with the American people” in supporting H.R. 676 and national health care. We’re off to a great start — more than 60 individuals and handful of organizations have signed so far— but we want to really show the politicians that people support national health care for all without insurance companies!

*To sign the signature ad, call the LP office (352-375-2832), come to a meeting or event, or download the form from our revamped website:  
[www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua](http://www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua)*

## ACLP looking into H.R. 676 yard signs

Hot on the heels of our new bumperstickers, the ACLP is investigating making yard signs in support of H.R. 676. We would like to know how many people would be willing to buy a sign (like the one below) for \$5 and put it in their yard. If you would be please call (375-2832) or email ([aclp@floridalaborparty.org](mailto:aclp@floridalaborparty.org)) the office.

# I Support H.R. 676

**National Healthcare for ALL!**

**NO premiums  
NO deductibles  
NO insurance companies**

# Alachua County LABOR PARTY

## Local Organizing Committee

[352] 375-2832

[www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua](http://www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua)  
[www.thelaborparty.org](http://www.thelaborparty.org)

[aclp@floridalaborparty.org](mailto:aclp@floridalaborparty.org)

### Mailing Address:

Post Office Box 12051  
Gainesville, FL 32604

### Office Address:

14 E. University Ave., #204

### Office Hours:

11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tuesday  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Thursday

### Alachua County Labor Party Board

Jenny Brown \* Co-chair  
Mark Piotrowski \*Co-chair  
Chad Hood \* Treasurer  
Gaby Gross \* Secretary  
David Hennig

**ACLP staffers:** Ann Murray,  
Jenny Brown

*Board meetings are held on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month and are open to all Labor Party members.*

### Upcoming Alachua County Labor Party General Meetings

(4th Tuesday of the month)

June 24

July 22

August 26

# John Penrod, Presente!

by Carol Giardina

As many of you know, my beloved comrade, Jack Penrod, died in April.

Here I am left with this immense love and immense sorrow wondering: *Shouldn't such a love have a public form?* Why? For solace? Yes, but more than that...to make use, somehow make use of it for that better world we are working for. But how?

How can I—we— help hold up Jack's share of the freedom banner?

So I thought that in memory of Jack's true life-long activism, to keep up the good fight, I would ask you to honor his commitment to the Labor Party and national health care by pledging to increase your own contribution to the Committee of 100 by \$5.00 per month (at the least).

If you have not yet joined the Committee of 100 join now for \$20 a month. Or take a first step toward membership by starting out with a monthly contribution of \$5.

Five dollars seems so small in comparison to the freedom fighting life Jack led. But if lots of us pitch in, as former Alachua County Labor Party staffer Larry Thompson (pictured

below with Jack at a Labor Party rally outside BlueCross/BlueShield) put it, "if we had more Jack Penrods we would already have the things we want like universal healthcare, free education, and workers having more control over their lives."

I am going to increase my contribution and I am proud to say that Larry, and John Swilley, too, will be raising theirs in Jack's name. Contributions honoring Jack's life will keep his name on the Committee of 100 and will be listed on Page 10 as:

(Donors in memory of John Penrod, Spanish Civil War veteran:

Carol Giardina, Larry Thompson, John Swilley, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name here))



*Jack Penrod (left) and Larry Thompson (right) participate in last year's protest outside the Gainesville offices of BlueCross/BlueShield. Jack was one of the earliest members of the Committee of 100, member of the Labor Party and proudly wore his Alachua County Labor Party shirt all over town.*

*Jack Penrod was one of the earliest members of the Committee of 100 & a dedicated LP member. We mourn his loss and offer our deepest sympathies to his family.*

## **John Arthur “Jack” Penrod ( 1913-2008 )**



Jack Penrod was a veteran of the MacKenzie-Papineau Battalion of the 15th International Brigade of the Spanish Republican Army during the Spanish Civil War. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, he was raised in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and resided in Gainesville, Florida, where he was a Professor and then Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Florida. Jack died April 12th in Gainesville at age 94.

Jack was a true forever activist. Before Spain he had been a radical student leader at Penn, his alma mater. There he joined the Communist Party USA which he would leave and rejoin three times before finally parting from it. After he graduated he worked with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) of the newly forming Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). He left union organizing

to join the defenders of Spanish democracy in 1937.

Jack entered Spain, whose borders had been closed, by crossing the Pyrenees Mountains on foot by night with fellow volunteers. He led a sniper squadron and saw action in major engagements such as Teruel. A high point was Smith's Maneuver where Jack and a handful of snipers held off advancing fascist armies. Jack was wounded and later served as an ambulance driver.

He was stationed in the Philippines during WWII where, at the war's end, he organized a cell within his unit to work with the radical Philippine Huks (the Huks had fought the Japanese invaders and were fighting for land reform) for U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines.

After WWII, Jack got his doctorate on the G.I. Bill and became a professor of English. At the University of Florida, he won the Thomas Jefferson Award for excellence in teaching. In the 1950s, Jack worked against McCarthyist political repression and later helped to organize the faculty union. He also helped to found the Unitarian Church and a

chapter of the United Nations Association.

He gave talks about the Spanish Civil War, demonstrated against the war in Iraq, was a member of the Labor Party, organized for national health insurance (H.R. 676), and wrote letters for political prisoners for Amnesty International. He was at it all the time.

He was a member of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and supported radical women's liberation including letting Redstockings and Gainesville Women's Liberation store archival material in his house, donating to fund drives, editing drafts of tracts, getting library books, and staffing phone banks for the Judith Brown scholarship.

He also volunteered as a reader for blind students, tutored ESL students, and served as a docent at the Harn museum.

Jack is survived by daughters Julie Penrod-Glenn and Jill McGuire, three grand children, three great grand children, and second wife, Carol Giardina. He was preceded in death by first wife, Jane Penrod, a great feminist, union organizer, and environmental activist.

*“HR 676 would provide coverage to all Americans without shifting the burden onto individuals – which is a key element in any reform effort”*

# **150,000 member Philadelphia AFL-CIO backs the National Health Insurance Act ( HR 676 )**

by Kay Tillow,

*All Unions Committee for H.R. 676*

The Philadelphia Council of the AFL-CIO has endorsed HR 676, single payer healthcare legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (D-MI).

Pat Eiding, who before becoming Council President was Business Manager of Asbestos Workers & Insulators Local 14, said after the vote: “47 million uninsured people in America is an embarrassment. We need to find a better way to do health care in this country. HR 676 would provide coverage to all Americans without shifting the burden onto individuals – which is a key element in any reform effort.”

The Philadelphia Council represents over 150,000 union members in the nation’s 6th largest city and has over 100 affiliated local unions in the private, public, building and transportation sectors. The endorsement resolution was introduced by Jim Savage, president of USW Local 10-1 and a vice president of the Philadelphia Council.

HR 676 would institute a single payer health care system in the U.S. by expanding a greatly improved Medicare system to every resident. HR 676 would cover every person in the U. S. for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs, hospital, surgical, outpatient services, primary and preventive care, emergency services, dental, mental health, home

health, physical therapy, rehabilitation (including for substance abuse), vision care, chiropractic and long term care.

HR 676 has been endorsed by 417 union organizations in 48 states including 107 Central Labor Councils and Area Labor Federations and 33 state AFL-CIO’s. HR 676 currently has 90 co-sponsors in addition to Conyers. Co-sponsors and bill text are here: Co-sponsors and bill text are here:

<http://tinyurl.com/3cjsto>

[or]

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:h.r.00676>:

## **Seven More Labor Councils Endorse HR 676**

Seven more Central Labor Councils have endorsed HR 676 bringing the national total to 107.

In Mansfield, Ohio, the Crawford-Richland Labor Council AFL-CIO endorsed HR 676 after inviting Dr. Jonathan Ross to address their regular monthly meeting. Dr. Ross, a Toledo physician, is a national leader of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP).

In Quincy, Massachusetts, the Norfolk County Labor Council AFL-CIO has also endorsed the Conyers legislation.

In Brockton, Massachusetts, the Plymouth-Bristol Central Labor Council

AFL-CIO endorsed HR 676. More than 50 per cent of Massachusetts CLC's have now endorsed the Conyers bill.

In Central Point, Oregon, the Southern Oregon Central Labor Council endorsed HR 676, reports Carol Bennett the council's Secretary/Treasurer. Bennett said, "We're glad that somebody is doing something. It's been a long time coming."

In Lowell, Massachusetts, the Merrimack Valley Central Labor Council also endorsed the Conyers legislation. The council has 35 affiliates with 40,000 union members in 32 Massachusetts cities and towns.

In Cattaragus, New York, the Cattaragus-Allegany Counties Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, also endorsed HR 676, reports Council President Hobart Rhinehart.

## **Indiana UAW Local Endorses HR 676**

UAW Local 3044 has endorsed HR 676, single payer healthcare legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (D-MI). The local represents workers at AK Steel Corporation, a state of the art steel finishing facility that produces finished steel for the automotive and appliance industry.

Rick Ditto, Local 3044 President, said: "Our local recognizes the dire need for health care reform in our country. Studying the various ideas for health care reform made our decision simple to endorse HR 676. It is the method of taking a proven existing system in Medicare, making improvements and expanding it to cover everyone of all ages. A win win situation for all."

## **Chicago Teachers Union, Four other AFT unions Endorse HR 676**

The 36,000 member Chicago Teachers Union (AFT Local 1) has endorsed HR 676, single payer healthcare legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (D-MI). The April 2nd endorsement came at the Local's 600-member House of Delegates meeting by a near unanimous vote. Those who spoke for the endorsement pointed out that not only would HR 676 cover everyone in the country but would also enable the union to take healthcare off the collective bargaining table.

The Chicago Teachers Union represents teachers and educational support personnel working in the 600 schools within the Chicago Public School System. Its members include approximately 26,500 teachers, 6,500 paraprofessionals and 3,000 retirees. CTU Local 1 of the AFT is the largest local in the state and was the founding union from which the AFT developed.

Four more affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), including two statewide affiliates, have also recently endorsed HR 676. In North Carolina, the State Federation of the AFT has endorsed HR 676, reports Dianne Jackson, President AFT/NC, and a media specialist at Glenwood Elementary School.

In Austin, Texas AFT Local 6249, which represents full and part time faculty and classified and professional/technical employees at Austin Community College, has also endorsed the Conyers legislation. Cleabum Zwememenn and Dan Dewberry, who are President and Treasurer of the local said of the

endorsement, “We have been fighting for health insurance for the adjunct faculty for years. We believe that health insurance is a moral imperative and the future of this country could hinge on access to health care.”

In Indianapolis, Indiana, the State Federation of Teachers/AFT has endorsed HR 676, reports Executive Director, Sally J. Sloan.

In Daly City, California, AFT Local 3267, Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers, endorsed HR 676, reports Melinda Dart President of the 300 member local union. Dart said: “We have had one 3 per cent raise in six years. In addition, many of our members pay out of pocket for health care. They have effectively taken a pay cut as health care costs escalate. We are at the mercy of our insurance companies and HMO’s which reveal their higher rates every summer. We desperately need a bill like HR 676 to succeed.”

## **California CWA and AFT/NEA Locals Endorse HR 676**

Big California unions continue to endorse HR 676, single payer healthcare legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (D-MI). A CWA local representing 12,000 employees at all campuses of the University of California and the Lawrence Berkeley and Lawrence Livermore National Labs has endorsed HR 676, reports Carolan Buckmaster, a member of the Statewide Executive Board and President of the United Professional & Technical Employees (UPTE-CWA 9119) San Diego Chapter.

In San Francisco, the 6,000 member United Educators of San Francisco

affiliated with both the AFT and NEA, has also endorsed HR 676, reports President Dennis Kelly. Kelly said: “Health care determines not only the well-being of our members, but it is increasingly a measure of the health of our economy. We need to take care of ourselves now so we can take care of future generations in this nation.”

## **Local Unions in Kentucky, New York and Maryland Endorse HR 676**

In Baltimore, Maryland, IAM Local Lodge 543 has endorsed HR 676.

In Cheektowaga, New York, Local 210 of the Laborers (LIUNA) has also endorsed the Conyers bill, reports Business Manager Sam Capitano.

In Louisville, Kentucky, Local 1447 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), which represents drivers, mechanics, clerks, and service personnel at the Transit Authority of River City, endorsed the single payer legislation, according to President Jonathan Dooley.

In Island Park, New York, Stephen Sombrotto, President of the 1,000 member Local 621 of the United Workers of America, reported his local endorsed the Conyers bill and said: “Our members and Executive Board feel that in the richest most powerful country in the world for our citizens to be without healthcare is absolutely not acceptable.”

*The above reports from the grassroots of the Labor Movement are provided by Kay Tillow of the All Unions Committee for H.R. 676 & the Nurses Professional Organization. Each month we reprint her reports, but if you'd like to receive Kay's updates write her at: [nursenpo@aol.com](mailto:nursenpo@aol.com).*

## **The Labor Party Program: A Call for Economic Justice**

Amend the Constitution to  
Guarantee Everyone a Job  
at a Living Wage

Pay Laid-off Workers Two  
Months Severance for Every  
Year of Service

Restore Workers Rights to  
Organize, Bargain and Strike

End Bigotry: An Injury to  
One Is an Injury to All

Guarantee Universal Access  
to Quality Health Care

More Time for Family and  
Community

Protect Our Families

Ensure Everyone Access to  
Quality Public Education

Stop Corporate Abuse of Trade

End Corporate Welfare as  
We Know It

Make the Wealthy Pay their  
Fair Share of Taxes

Revitalize the Public Sector

End Corporate Domination  
of Elections

Build A Just Transition  
Movement to Protect Jobs  
and the Environment

Enforce Safety & Health  
Regulation with Worker  
Inspectors

Reclaiming the Workplace: Job  
Design, Technology and Skill

# **A closer look at the Labor Party platform, “A Call For Economic Justice”**

*Each month we take a closer look at a different part of the Labor Party's 16-point platform, “A Call for Economic Justice.” The full program is available at [www.thelaborparty.org](http://www.thelaborparty.org)*

## **7. Protect Our Families**

- Paid Family Leave
- Flexible Working Schedules
- Affordable Child and Elder Care for All
- Mandatory Minimum Pensions for All
- Guaranteed Adequate Annual Income for All

While politicians babble about family values, this Labor Party intends to do something real to protect our families.

We call for a basic benefit package that covers all working people — full-time and part-time workers, employed and unemployed. This package would include:

- Twelve weeks paid family leave for each newborn or adopted child, and for taking care of ill family members.
- A guarantee of flexible working schedules so that we can arrange our own time to deal with personal and family concerns.
- Mandatory minimum pensions for all workers, fully vested and portable, that do not reduce social security benefits.
- Subsidized, high quality child care and elder care for all who need it.
- A guaranteed adequate annual income for all, with a yearly cost of living allowance increase, which will bring both families and individuals up and out of poverty.

Such benefits already exist in most European countries. But they are under attack by corporations that want benefits pushed down to the lower levels that exist in the U.S. We must end this race to the bottom by bringing our benefits up to more just and humane standards.

This is *our* program to protect family values.

# Join us on the Committee of 100!

## What is the Committee of 100?

The Committee of 100 is a group of people who have pledged \$20 a month to fund a full-time Alachua County Labor Party staffer to coordinate the Just Health Care campaign (or 2 half-time organizers).

## Why is a full-time organizer so important?

In 2000, we sponsored a non-binding referendum asking Alachua County voters if they would support a system like Just Health Care. It won overwhelming support,

receiving more votes than either Bush or Gore. In follow-up meetings, we determined that having a paid organizer was the key to that highly successful campaign. And keeping a paid organizer is critical for our continued success.

The struggle for Just Health Care is now being fought at the local, state, and national levels. While we coordinate volunteers and events at the local level, we are also working around the state and country as we continue to build the coalition of groups fighting for single payer health care.

## It's working!

*The contributions of the current Committee of 100 allow us to fund Ann Murray and Jenny Brown as our part-time organizers.* Joining the Committee of 100 will allow us to expand Ann and Jenny's hours to full time or bring on another part-time organizer.

## Great! How do I sign up?

Send your information to the address on the facing page or contact us by phone (375-2832) or e-mail (c100@floridalaborparty.org) for more information.

## 84 Committee Members, 16 to go!

Harriet Ludwig	Joe Courter	Kathleen Maynard	Ann Murray	Bridget Fitzgerald
Mary Jo Hofmeyer	Alan Geering	Ira Clark	Murdo MacLeod	Gaby Gross
Bill Gilbert	Bill Batlle	Jerry & Larissa Williamson	Arlene Bargard	Anna & Nic Guest-Jelly
Mark Piotrowski	Phil Haisley	Kenneth Weeks	Vibeke Vala	George & Pheobe Papadi
Dan Harmeling	Caron Cadle	Zoharah Simmons	Martin Vala	John Murray
Kevin Oden	Rosemary Lynch & Norman Balabanian	Gail & James Moss	Isabel Barten	Eileen Roy
Michele Gould	Andrea Costello	LuJoye Barnes	Rich Templin	Jean Rigg
Bill Stephenson	Charles Willett	Arthur and Mary Crummer	Fe Ripka	Jim Morrison
Jenny Brown	Jape Taylor	Kathie Sarachild	Jim Ripka	Betty Odum
Nina Postlethwaite	Amy Coenen	Jane & Norm Holland	Sally & Josh Dickinson	Clint Robinson
Dave Hennig	Carol Giardina	Aline Gubrium	Adele Franson	Kirk Anthony
Pennie Foster	Scott Camil & Sherry Steiner	Randi Cameon	Chris Medved	Zot Szurgot and Audrey Holt
Candi Churchill	Howard Rosenfeld	Carol Thomas	Judith Murray	Herbert Spencer
Linda Lavery	Chad Hood	Pam Ellis	Gainesville Vets for Peace	<b>NEW!</b> Robert Ing
Larry Thompson	Eric Piotrowski	Jeff Mason	Albert Meyer	<b>NEW!</b> Ann Cassin
John Swilley	Joe Richard	Alex Leader	Shawna Doran	84. _____
John Penrod (in memoriam)*	Steven Schell	Chris Cogle	Alachua County Green Party	(Your name here)
Erika Gubrium				
Daniel Gimenez				

\* Donors in memory of John Penrod, Spanish Civil War veteran: Carol Giardina, Larry Thompson, John Swilley

# Labor Party Membership & Order Form

Please make all checks to "Labor Party". Send order form to:  
Alachua County Labor Party, PO Box 12051, Gainesville, FL 32604

**I want to join the Labor Party (\$20/year)**

Membership includes a one-year subscription to the ACLP newsletter. Joining the Labor Party DOES NOT affect your voter registration.

**I want to join the Committee of 100 (\$20/mo)**

Joining the Committee of 100 includes a one-year national Labor Party membership. I'd like to pay my dues:

- Monthly - \$20/month
- Quarterly - \$60/quarter
- Annually - \$240/year

**new! H.R. 676 bumper stickers (\$2)**

Finally available! Our brand-spanking-new red & white bumper stickers will look great on your car & will show your support for national health care!



Number of stickers ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$2/sticker + \$1 s/h per order)

**July 8 Citizen's Congressional Health Care Hearing DVD (\$5)**

This 3 hours+ DVD contains the July 8, 2006 Citizens' Congressional Health Care Hearing held in Gainesville, Florida — including more than 30 citizen testimonies.

Number of DVDs ordered: \_\_\_\_\_



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

# May 2008 Labor Party General Meeting

*Planning for the June 19th National Day of Action  
Against Insurance Companies & a report from the  
Healthcare-NOW board meeting*

*Labor Party Co-chair was recently added to the Board  
of Directors of Healthcare-NOW, the national coalition  
organizing support for H.R. 676. He'll talk about the  
organizing around the June 19 Day of Action and an  
exciting new national organizing campaign*

## Tues., May 27

*Alachua County Education  
Association Union Hall*

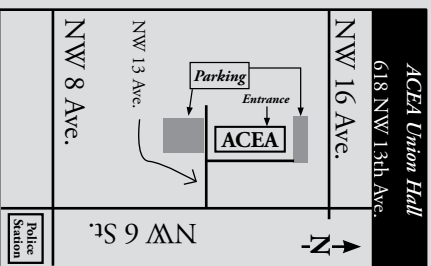
### 618 NW 13th Ave

*(turn west onto 13th Ave  
from NW 6th St.)*

### 6:30 pm

**(pizza at 6)**

*For more info or  
directions call 375-2832*



**Alachua County  
LABOR PARTY**

Post Office Box 12051  
Gainesville, FL 32604